

## MEETING MINUTES

<b>Meeting/ Project Name:</b>	<b>Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UC<sub>3</sub>)</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>October 4, 2017</b>	<b>Time:</b>	10 AM – 4 PM
<b>Minutes Prepared By:</b>	<b>Kate Wilson</b>	<b>Location:</b>	Montana DNRC, Missoula
<b>1. Welcome and Introductions</b>			
Welcome	Stephanie opened the meeting at 10:02. Description of UC <sub>3</sub> and relationship to DNRC.		
Rep. Mike Cuffe	<p>Stephanie introduced Rep. Cuffe, who addressed the council and provided an overview and background of AIS and the UC<sub>3</sub> in Montana.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rep. Cuffe was the sponsor of bill that created UC<sub>3</sub> – one of major advocates and champions for AIS in Montana.</li> <li>Importance of issue was really driven home last fall when mussel veligers were detected in MT</li> <li>One of very big responsibilities of Montana is that we are one of the major tributaries to the Columbia River Basin (CRB). Kootenai, Bitterroot, Blackfoot, Clark Fork and Flathead Rivers among the largest. The CRB drainage is the only major river drainage in the US that is not already infested with <i>Dreissenid</i> mussels. This makes western Montana unique, and in a very important position.</li> <li>First was engaged in issue through Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER). Appropriations subcommittee was working to improve the Montana AIS program, and met Rep. Eric Anderson (Idaho), who brought the issue to PNWER to take on as an economic (and environmental) issue.</li> <li>Introduced new state staff Tom and Kate. Both have been working in AIS management for a decade. When mussel veligers were detected in Montana, there was no response plan in place. An Incident Command System (ICS) was set up to address the issue and respond to the emergency situation.</li> <li>PNWER representatives came for visit to Montana and Rep. Cuffe gave tour of ICS and status of mussel response in Montana. PNWER region \$500M annual estimated cost of a mussel infestation (hydro, irrigation, water intakes/resources, etc).</li> <li>\$6.5M annually allocated currently for AIS (previously \$1.5M from general fund). Created a tax for power users and anglers (conservation fee) to fund the program for the first two years. These two sources were identified because of the potential impact of mussels on energy and fisheries. Discussion and deliberation on funding sources is ongoing.</li> <li>HB622 set out a programmatic focus and framework. SB 363 set up the program's funding mechanism for the biennium ending June 30, 2019. New legislation to support the program will need to be passed in the 2019 Legislature.</li> <li>Think about gaps and deficiencies – 'firewall' along continental divide, which is a big part of why UC<sub>3</sub> was established</li> <li>Flathead Basin Commission struggling right now - operational funding is proposed to be cut (Legislative financial committee hearing today). Example of group that has been engaged and taking a leadership role in the region on AIS issues.</li> <li>PNWER July 2017 Montana was on the stage at plenary for 'hot potato award' (a group that takes on a major issue), which signified a change in opinion about the state's preparedness</li> <li>'Firewall not bulletproof' – all of our stronger together</li> </ul>		

Introductions (roundtable)	<p>Each participant introduced themselves including name, location and organization/interest that they are representing today.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 400,000 electric cooperative members in Montana</li> <li>• USFWS provided funding support for EDRR (FWP) and eDNA (FBC)</li> <li>• Avista recently purchased by HydroOne (out of Ontario)</li> </ul>
<b>2. Attendees</b>	
<p>Members: Senator Gene M. Vuckovich, (Anaconda/Deer Lodge), Kate Wilson (DNRC), <u>Tom Woolf</u> (FWP, representing MISC), <u>Lori Curtis</u> (Conservation Districts of Montana), Brian Johnson (Sea Me Paddle Kayak Tours, Spoke and Paddle, provide 3 state parks at Flathead with non-motorized boats, Recreational Alliance of Flathead Lake), <u>Dennis Clairmont</u> (Confederated Salish &amp; Kootenai Tribal member), <u>Mike Koopal</u> (Director of Whitefish Institute, NW Volunteer Monitoring Network), Chris Parrott (Jesco Marine &amp; Powersports), Stacy Schnebel (Montana Electric Cooperative Association, Flathead Electric), Phil Matson (private landowner, also works for Flathead Biological Station), Rep. Matt Regier (Flathead District, Montanan that loves the outdoors), Joanne Grady (US Fish &amp; Wildlife Service, AIS Coordinator for Region 6), Chris Downs (Glacier National Park, FBC monitoring group), Erin Swaider (Northern Region of USFS), <u>Paul Kusnierz</u> (Avista fisheries biologist - phone), Monica Pokorny (NRCS - phone)</p> <p>Public/Other: Bryce Christiaens (MISC, Missoula County Weed District), Stephanie Hester (DNRC), Rep. Mike Cuffe (Eureka), Erik Hanson (Confederated Salish &amp; Kootenai Tribe AIS staff), Nicky Ouellet (Montana Public Radio), Hope Stockwell (staff Env Quality Council, drafted all AIS legislation since 2009, observer for EQC - phone)</p> <p>*Underlines denote voting members who have been appointed by Governor Bullock (current as of 10/20)</p>	
<b>3. Agenda and Notes, Decisions, Issues</b>	
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
Stephanie Hester	<p>Stephanie addresses the Commission and provided an overview of the agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 month time frame to tackle priorities for UC3</li> <li>• Group to send email to Kate for documents or with technical issues</li> </ul>
Tom Woolf	<p>Montana's AIS Program overview and updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize importance of partners in the region – UC3 way to ensure enhanced coordination and cooperation on AIS efforts</li> <li>• Over 30 watercraft inspection stations this season (most open until Oct 15)</li> <li>• Over 73,000 watercraft inspected this year (still inputting data); 16 intercepted with mussels, also some with aquatic plants (and standing water)</li> <li>• Tiber boat traffic data will be available by next meeting. The station has been difficult to staff and manage due to remoteness of reservoir. Water temps were high 50s last week. No inspection staff will be retained over the winter, but regional staff can provide inspections if necessary for ice fisherman, etc.</li> <li>• Over 1,100 plankton tows have been analyzed – no mussels (larvae or adults) have been detected this season. Will be on Tiber and Canyon Ferry next week (where veligers detected last season). Two-week turnaround time from when sample was collected to analysis. Will be able to increase capacity with contracted lab soon (currently out for bid).</li> <li>• Statewide education program: billboards, radio, TV, etc. Hiring a new outreach staff and Public Info Officer for FWP. Currently have an outreach/PR firm on contract to develop new AIS outreach strategy for the state (has just been initiated).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapid Response Guidelines for mussel detection – still taking comments on the draft. Will be a living document that can evolve and improve over time.</li> <li>• Incident Command Training coming to FWP (hired third party)</li> <li>• Fish pathogen PKD is being sampled for in western Montana (fish kill last season). Currently looking for funding to analyze samples to get a better</li> <li>• Looking at ways to improve program and partnerships for next year</li> <li>• Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) is providing funding match for AIS Program (\$1.8M to Montana). Initially \$4M allocated annually in the Columbia River Basin. Can be used across Montana for protecting the Columbia River Basin (including watercraft inspections and monitoring). \$5M allocated tentatively for next season (\$1M for monitoring) across CRB.</li> </ul>
Stephanie Hester and Bryce Christiaens	<p>DNRC Role in AIS Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>AIS Grant Program</u>: established to provide financial and technical support for local AIS projects. Has been running for 8 years.</li> <li>○ <u>Montana Invasive Species Council</u>: All taxa council established in 2014 by executive order. Brought together 23 partners (state, federal, local governments, industry, tribes, non-profits, etc.) to provide recommendations and oversight on invasive species programs in Montana (Montana Invasive Species Framework). Council reformed in last legislation session through HB 622, provided additional charges and provided membership changes (agriculture, wildlife conservation, transportation, and fishing organizations added to membership). HB622 stipulates priorities for MISC for 2 year term, including science advisory panel for AIS, rapid response guidelines specific to <i>Dreissenid</i> mussels (as well as working with APHIS on response for other high priority invasives), an invasive species law review for the state on existing legislation and regulations to assess gaps, and improving the data management for invasive species (reporting, tracking, etc.).</li> <li>○ <u>Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UC3)</u>: Created through HB622</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Review of UC<sub>3</sub> enabling legislation (HB622) – highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ UC<sub>3</sub> attached to DNRC for administrative purposes</li> <li>○ 9 voting commission members: initial appointments made (senator, representative, Conservation Districts, MISC, Confederated Salish &amp; Kootenai Tribe, hydro, member at large); some still waiting confirmation (private landowner, private industry, recreation organization, electric cooperatives)</li> <li>○ Chair has not yet been appointed (by the Governor) – Lori has volunteered. Request was made for others to come forward if interested in chair – none.</li> <li>○ Federal agencies to participate and provide input, but ex-officio (non-voting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bureau of Reclamation, US Army Corps of Engineers, Northwest Power Planning Council and Province of BC not here today because of WA rapid response exercise (mussel-focused)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Section 6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Purpose: protect aquatic environment in tributaries of Columbia River from invasive species (not just mussels, though that is known to be the imminent threat currently)</li> <li>○ UC<sub>3</sub>: 4 specific deliverables: annual monitoring plan, education and outreach strategy, making recommendations to the Governor (program, funding,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>policy, etc.), and annual reporting. Can go above and beyond to address AIS issues in the Upper Columbia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How are MISC and UC3 staffed? DNRC provides staffing to manage and administer these groups. Staff roles and responsibilities will be provided and discussed at the next meeting.</li> <li>○ How are these programs funded? Different appropriations from different bills as well as federal money support Montana's AIS programs. DNRC will provide a budget summary at the next meeting.</li> <li>○ UC3 and MISC can raise funding to support activities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Stephanie Hester	<p>Administrative Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UC3 Charter and Bylaws – based on MIST bylaws, Roberts Rules of Order and HB622. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Things to focus on: 1) what items to vote on vs. consensus. 2) How to take into account feedback from non-voting members. 3) Establishment and running of sub-committees. <u>Provide any suggestions or feedback on charter and by-laws to Kate Wilson (<a href="mailto:kate.wilson@mt.gov">kate.wilson@mt.gov</a>) by the end of November.</u></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Member roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Federal agency representation: 'Safeguarding the West' (all Dept of the Interior agencies participating in the creation of this document). Secretary Zinke and Dept of Interior role and assistance. Hilary Smith has monthly phone calls with Dept of Interior (reporting for 'Safeguarding the West') and other federal agencies. \$4.9M allocated for invasive species federally (Dept of Interior)</li> <li>• Funding, budget, travel policy, fiscal reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ \$10,000 bi-annually allocated to UC<sub>3</sub> for member travel, etc.</li> <li>○ Voting members (and Legislators) are able to get reimbursed for travel (need form and social security number in order to process)</li> <li>○ DNRC will provide fiscal services and accounting for the UC<sub>3</sub> allocation provided through HB 622.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Frequency of meetings: Obligated to meet at least twice annually, can be more frequent (e.g. quarterly) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rep. Cuffe suggested no later than January meeting (a lot of the agency reports will be released by that time)</li> <li>○ Tom suggested UC<sub>3</sub> hosting a stakeholder 'watercraft inspection and monitoring' meeting this fall – share info but prepare for next season as well (Nov/Dec). Hold next full meeting in January</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Kate Wilson	<p>UC<sub>3</sub> Implementation, Prioritization and Sub-Committee Creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision exercise</li> <li>• Priority activities to accomplish objectives</li> </ul> <p>Short-term ('What does success look like for the UC<sub>3</sub>?')</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear ideas and messaging for public and stakeholders</li> <li>• Personal responsibility—behavior change</li> <li>• Coordinated and cooperative efforts between-tribal, local, state, federal, NGO land managers</li> <li>• Mussel-free</li> <li>• Confidence in early detection</li> <li>• Rapid response preparation</li> <li>• Consistent and efficient monitoring program</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective prevention</li> <li>• Environment for open communication</li> <li>• Acknowledging stakeholders are all working on issue and figure out how to do it better</li> <li>• Connecting CRB to the larger landscape issue</li> <li>• Addressing potential gaps in WIP locations and strategy</li> <li>• People getting inspected feel part of the solution not the problem</li> <li>• Outreach to local business/industry</li> <li>• Reach out to other local groups, Swan Lakers, Flathead Lakers, Little Bitterroot</li> <li>• Effective multi-level and consistent outreach campaign</li> <li>• Consistent messaging</li> <li>• WIP and monitoring seasonal review and next season preparedness meetings</li> <li>• Clarity about interagency roles and programs</li> <li>• Show the before and after good and bad but without scare tactics</li> <li>• Electronic/digital data entry for inspections like other jurisdictions</li> </ul> <p>Long-term ('What does success look like for the UC<sub>3</sub>?')</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Montana as a model AIS program. Replicable</li> <li>• Ownership of the issue—measurable behavior change</li> <li>• Management plan for this week to continue into the future</li> <li>• Keeping this issue alive</li> <li>• Tell success stories</li> <li>• Change of paradigm in agencies that mussels are inevitable</li> <li>• R&amp;D for better monitoring, risk factors, control, sampling locations</li> <li>• Pathway risk (address). Acknowledge efforts are for mussels, can prevent other AIS</li> <li>• Establish metrics to measure success</li> </ul> <p>Sub-committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Detection and Monitoring: <b>Paul, Tom, Cameron, Erik, Mike K., Phil, Kate</b></li> <li>• Rapid Response Preparedness: <b>Joanne, Erik, Chris D., Tom, Dennis, Bryce, Kate</b></li> <li>• Education and Outreach: <b>Chris P., Lori, Erik, Stacey, Tom, BJ, Kate</b></li> <li>• Sub-committees to Catalogue/inventory existing efforts</li> <li>• Can augment with external members</li> <li>• Chair of subcommittees: wait until all voting members appointed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>Should chair of subcommittee be a voting member?</u></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Tom Woolf	<p>Background on existing Montana AIS Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Statewide program: Clean Drain Dry</li> <li>○ Billboards, social media, TV and radio ads</li> <li>○ Currently being reevaluated (PR firm on contract) –</li> <li>○ Hiring marketing firm for AIS campaign. New campaign in place by 2018. Working with Department of Commerce on this project. UC3 could provide feedback on the strategy that they draft, and help provide input and identify gaps to enhance existing efforts</li> <li>○ Connect with Invasive Species Action Network (ISAN) on non-motorized boat outreach and Don't Let it Loose campaign</li> <li>○ Identify additional needs and gaps (ex: buying a new boat, engaging a specific audience, etc.)</li> <li>○ Hiring new education staff (Public Info Officer)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enhance AIS education to schools</li> <li>○ Get input before statewide campaign (from PR firm) goes out next year</li> <li>○ Existing Education &amp; Outreach Strategy from Incident Command, can be adapted for future efforts</li> <li>○ Dept. of Commerce will be connected through ad agency as well</li> <li>○ 'Don't Let it Loose' campaign as well, but this group to focus on Clean Drain Dry (mussels)</li> <li>○ School education/curriculum – will connect with ISAN</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention/watercraft inspection program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ramped up this past year due to mussel veliger detections</li> <li>○ Standard training adopted (and modified) by the state – FWP has training manual (will be updated this season). Would be useful to have this for the standard for all inspection protocols in the state (as base). FWP requested to be involved in training for partners.</li> <li>○ Colorado has a data app (electronic/digital) on a tablet with a template that Montana is looking to adopt (currently use paper inspection surveys). Way to streamline watercraft inspection data across partners. Can customize if desired. Might have barcode reading capabilities by next season.</li> <li>○ Potential passport implementation for future (for frequent boaters),</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Monitoring/survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staff of 8 (2 permanent, 6 seasonal) to monitor for invasive mussels. Use microscopy (under microscope looking at each sample).</li> <li>○ Protocol for monitoring to be finalized over the winter, can share with partners (after soliciting feedback).</li> <li>○ Surveys this season: over 1400 samples (plankton tows), but also look at boat launches for plants and invertebrates. No new detections this year.</li> <li>○ Could discuss sampling plan and locations with this group to maximize efficiency (e.g. select locations based on what is already taking place regionally). Identify who is doing what where and ensure consistent protocols and reporting.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Early Detection/Rapid Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ State Rapid Response Guidelines drafted and open for comment currently</li> <li>○ Contractor coming in to train FWP on ICS and rapid response. Also evaluating the draft guidelines. Ties in to the Columbia River Basin rapid response plan.</li> <li>○ Montana Heritage Fund as potential for species profiles, reporting and tracking (previously just native and rare species)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Regional groups	<p>Assess and inventory existing efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSKT has education program with approved curriculum</li> <li>• Crown of the Continent ID guide</li> <li>• CRB/100<sup>th</sup> Meridian</li> <li>• Western Regional Panel</li> </ul>
Next Steps	<p>Membership Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review bylaws/charter and submit edits to Kate Wilson before next meeting (kate.wilson@mt.gov)</li> <li>• Moving forward: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assess existing efforts and plans (state, regional)</li> <li>○ Identify gaps in existing efforts (subcommittees on specific topics)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fill gaps by building plan for UC3 and making recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If necessary, can apply for grants or seek donations for specific projects</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Appointments (expected in next two weeks) – wait to select sub-committee chairs</li> </ul> <p>Staff next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select date and work on agenda for 2017 season wrap up meeting (UC3 to host) and prepare for 2018 season</li> <li>• Pool potential dates for next UC3 meeting after Jan 1, 2018</li> </ul>
Public Comment	<p>Cuffe—PNWER regional AIS coordination, good tie in with this group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liked what he heard and saw today. UC3 on good track</li> </ul>
Wrap up	Adjourned at 3:53 pm

4. Action Items				
	Action	Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Send out meeting notes and updates	Kate Wilson	10/20/17	Completed
2	Review DRAFT bylaws and charter. Provide comments to Kate Wilson ( <a href="mailto:kate.wilson@mt.gov">kate.wilson@mt.gov</a> ) before the next meeting.	All	11/30/17	In process
3	Kate to put together potential dates to host a 'season review' and potentially a short general UC3 meeting	Kate Wilson/Tom Woolf	10/15/17	Completed
4	Kate to put together potential dates for next full UC3 meeting (January) and doodle poll group	Kate Wilson	10/20/17	Completed
5	Gather existing plans/efforts and synthesize for rest of group (FWP, regional groups such as FBC, CSKT). Education and Outreach, Monitoring, Inspection training manual	Kate Wilson/Tom Woolf/regional groups	2/15/18	On-going, info compiled in workshop report
6	Sub-Committees: Select chairs and meeting plans. Inventory of existing efforts, plans and materials. Should sub-committee chairs be voting members? (group to decide)	Sub-Committee chairs, once determined	1/24/18	In process
7	Look into options for potential repository/shared site for UC <sub>3</sub>	Kate Wilson	1/15/18	Completed – no options at this time
8	Budget overview – MT Invasive Species Programs	EQC provided	1/24/18	Completed